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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 12 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Reports of States parties due in 2012

Saudi Arabia*

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Initial report of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Contents

		Page
I.	General information	4
	(a) Process of preparation of the report	4
	(b) How the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were taken into account	5
	(c) Contribution of measures to implement the Protocol to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child	6
	(d) Legal status of the Protocol in national legislation	6
	(e) Reservations to the Protocol	7
	(f) Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Protocol	7
II.	Data	7
	Data on the offences described in the Protocol	7
	(a) Sale of children	7
	(b) Child prostitution	8
	(c) Child pornography	8
III.	General measures of implementation	8
	(a) Legislative framework for implementation of the Protocol	8
	(b) Bodies responsible for implementation of the Protocol	10
	(c) Dissemination of the Protocol and provision of training	12
	(d) The budget allocated to activities relating to implementation of the Protocol	13
	(e) National plans and strategies for implementation of the Protocol	13
	(f) Participation of civil society in the implementation of the Protocol	15
	(g) Oversight and monitoring mechanisms	15
IV.	Preventive measures	17
	(a) Protection of children who are especially vulnerable to the offences described in the Protocol	17
	(b) Promotion of public awareness of the consequences of the offences described in the Protocol	18
V.	Prohibition of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	20
	(a) Criminal laws that prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	20
	(b) Material elements of the offences described in the Protocol	21
	(c) Maximum and minimum penalties and aggravating circumstances	21
	(d) Statute of limitations for the offences	23
	(e) Other relevant offences	23

(f) Criminal liability of legal persons 24
(g) Guardianship 24
(h) Laws prohibiting the dissemination of material advertising the offences described in the Protocol 25
(i) Jurisdiction 25
(j) Extradition of accused persons 26
(k) Seizure and confiscation of materials used to commit offences described in the Protocol as well as proceeds derived therefrom and closure of the premises 26
VI. Protection of the rights and interests of victims 27
(a) Measures adopted to protect victims 27
(b) Training for persons who work with victims of the offences described in the Protocol 28
(c) Protection of the safety and integrity of persons involved in protecting victims of the offences described in the Protocol 30
(d) Guarantee of a fair and impartial trial 30
(e) Social reintegration programmes 31
(f) Remedies 32
VII. International assistance and cooperation 32
Conclusion 34

Introduction

1. In accordance with article 12 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[1] the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hereby submits its initial report concerning implementation of the provisions of the Protocol.[2] The report covers the period from 2011 to 2016. It should be noted that the Kingdom acceded to the Protocol pursuant to Royal Decree No. 38 of A.H. 18 Rajab 1431 (30 June 2010), as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child following its consideration of the Kingdom's second periodic report concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] in January 2006.

2. The Kingdom submitted its combined third and fourth reports concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2013 and it was discussed on 20 and 21 September 2016. The report contained a great deal of information and data on measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention and to respond in detail to the Committee's recommendations. The Kingdom also replied to the list of issues published by the Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning the report, providing information on recent measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention. It would therefore be useful to consult those documents when considering this report.

3. The Kingdom has adopted a number of measures, including the enactment of national legislation, amendment of certain laws, establishment and launching of institutional mechanisms, adoption of many implementation measures, and enhancement of remedies, including development of the judicial system with a view to strengthening the legal and institutional human rights framework and promoting and protecting human rights and the rights of the child. Although efforts to promote and protect the rights of the child faced a number of challenges, positive results have been achieved. This report will review both the results and the challenges encountered.

4. The report will also review the measures taken to implement the provisions of the Protocol, including the legal and institutional framework, particularly criminal legislation defining the offences of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the penalties prescribed, remedies and related procedures, preventive measures, protection and rehabilitation of victims and their reintegration into society, and international assistance and cooperation in achieving the objectives and implementing the provisions of the Protocol.

I. General information

(a) Process of preparation of the report

5. As the Kingdom attaches importance to reports to the treaty bodies as an effective tool and a valuable opportunity to improve the human rights situation in States parties, and as their submission constitutes a State obligation under the treaties concerned, Royal Decree No. 13084 of A.H. 27 Rabi' al-Awwal 1436 (18 January 2015) established a Standing Committee composed of representatives of competent government bodies to prepare the Kingdom's reports on human rights conventions to which it is a party. The Committee was granted broad powers to prepare and submit reports in a timely and effective manner. It prepared the current report on the basis of the revised guidelines regarding initial reports to be submitted under article 12 (1) of the Protocol, proceeding in accordance with the following stages applicable to the preparation of the Kingdom's treaty body reports:

[1] Hereinafter referred to as "the Protocol".
[2] Hereinafter referred to as "the report".
[3] Hereinafter referred to as "the Convention".

- **Preparatory stage**: This stage focused on providing the members of the Committee responsible for preparing the report and representatives of civil society organizations with the knowledge and skills required for preparing treaty body reports through training courses and workshops. The Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Cooperation signed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in 2012 was utilized for the purpose.[4]
- **Information gathering stage**: The process of gathering the information required for the report was based primarily on the following principles: objectivity, transparency and authentication. Meetings were also held with representatives of civil society organizations to obtain relevant information and to review the information provided. It should be noted that the information gathering process continued until the date of submission of the report.
- **Drafting stage**: During this stage, the information provided was incorporated in appropriate sections of the report, based primarily on the following methodological criteria: selection of broad-based information that assists the Committee in understanding the general situation; highlighting and analysing statistical data; and use of technical terms that facilitate reading and discussion of the report.
- **National review and consultation phase**: During this stage, representatives of governmental bodies and civil society organizations involved in preparing the report were invited to review and discuss it at meetings, through correspondence and at workshops. The review resulted in a number of amendments to the draft report, which were incorporated in the final version.

(b) How the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were taken into account

6. The legislation in force in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia guarantees the protection of human rights. Article 26 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that: "The State shall protect human rights in accordance with the Islamic sharia." Equality and non-discrimination are also guaranteed. Article 8 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that: "Governance in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall be based on justice, consultation and equality, in accordance with the Islamic sharia." The Child Protection Act, promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/14 of A.H. 3 Safar 1436 (26 November 2014), contains a number of provisions that are consistent with those of the Convention and with the principle of the best interests of the child. The Act prohibits all forms of child abuse or exposure to any form of sexual exploitation, criminal trafficking or begging. It reaffirms the provisions of the Islamic sharia, international law and the treaties ratified by the Kingdom, which guarantee children's rights and protect them from all forms of abuse and neglect, and it grants children priority in the enjoyment of protection, care and relief.

7. The Act guarantees the right to life, survival and development of all children without discrimination. It also guarantees care for children, especially the most needy, regardless of their gender, colour, race or belief, for instance orphans, children with disabilities, children of unknown parentage, and children who are deprived of the care of one or both parents or of relatives because of death, separation of spouses, their mother's illness or any other circumstances. Under article 7 of the Child Protection Act, children who lack an appropriate family environment and are at risk of abuse or neglect have the right to alternative care in a foster family or, if no such family is available, in social welfare institutions run by the Government, civil society or charitable organizations. Thus, social, psychological, health and vocational care is provided to children whose circumstances prevent them being raised in their natural families, thereby ensuring that they can enjoy a sound upbringing.

8. All children in alternative or foster families, or in social care institutions, are educated in State-run schools. Children also participate in cultural and media activities that

[4] It will be discussed in some detail at an appropriate point in the report.

enable them to express their opinions and manifest their talents, and take part in extracurricular activities in schools.

9. It should be noted that the measures taken to achieve the objectives of the Protocol must be fully in line with the general principles of the Convention. Thus, when the Kingdom drafts new legislation or reviews existing legislation, it takes into account its obligations under the human rights treaties to which it is a party. It adopted that approach when drafting the Child Protection Act referred to in paragraph 6 of the report.

(c) Contribution of measures to implement the Protocol to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

10. The provisions of the Convention and the Protocol are complementary. Accordingly, implementation of the Convention, in particular the provisions on extradition, guardianship, economic and sexual exploitation, and child abduction, sale or trafficking, is largely conducive to the implementation of the Protocol. Furthermore, implementation of certain provisions of the Convention can prevent the perpetration of offences described in the Protocol, for instance by prohibiting discrimination against children on any ground, ensuring the survival and development of the child, ensuring that children are registered immediately after birth and that they cannot be separated from their parents against their will, protecting them from information and media material that would be detrimental to their well-being, protecting them from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse or neglect, and providing protection and humanitarian assistance for children who are seeking refugee status or who are considered to be refugees in accordance with the law, etc. The same applies to the Protocol: implementation of its provisions necessarily leads to the effective implementation of a number of provisions of the Convention. For instance, implementation of article 3 of the Protocol leads to the effective implementation of articles 21, 32, 34, 35 and 36 of the Convention.

11. A great deal of information contained in the present report and in the Kingdom's combined third and fourth reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child confirms that measures taken by the Kingdom to implement the Protocol have contributed to the implementation of the Convention. With regard to legislative measures, for instance, the provisions of article 9 of the Child Protection Act referred to in the report, which prohibits the sexual exploitation of a child or exposure of a child to sexual exploitation, not only implements one of the provisions of the Protocol (article 3), but is also conducive to implementation of the provisions of article 34 of the Convention.

(d) Legal status of the Protocol in national legislation

12. Any international or regional instrument to which the Kingdom has acceded or which it has ratified forms part of its legislation and acquires the same binding legal status as national legislation. The legal instrument whereby laws are promulgated in the Kingdom is the instrument used by the Kingdom to accede to legal instruments and treaties. Article 70 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that: "Laws, international treaties and agreements, and concessions shall be promulgated and amended by royal decree." Accordingly, the relevant governmental bodies are required to implement the Protocol, and its provisions can be invoked before domestic courts. The Kingdom's accession to the Protocol was approved by Royal Decree No. M/38 of A.H. 18 Rajab 1431 (30 June 2010), which instructs the executive authorities to enforce it in each jurisdiction.

13. Following the Kingdom's accession to the Protocol, its text was published in Official Gazette No. 4318 of A.H. 3 Ramadan 1431 (13 August 2010), in line with the procedure for accession to treaties and promulgation of legislation. It should be noted that article 11 (1) of the procedures for concluding international treaties, promulgated by Council of Ministers Decision No. 287 of A.H. 14 Sha'ban 1431 (26 July 2010), stipulates that the competent authorities shall take the necessary measures to implement the Convention, on its entry into force, so as to guarantee compliance with all the Kingdom's ensuing obligations.

14. The National Commission for Childhood has also launched awareness-raising campaigns among the competent governmental agencies with a view to ensuring that the relevant provisions of the Protocol are implemented. The Protocol was included among the international and regional standards on which the Human Rights Commission relies in discharging its functions pursuant to article 5 of its Statute, which requires it to monitor governmental bodies to ensure that they take the requisite steps to implement the international human rights instruments to which the Kingdom has acceded.

(e) Reservations to the Protocol

15. The Kingdom has not entered any reservations to the Protocol.

(f) Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Protocol

16. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken numerous steps to implement the provisions of the Protocol, including action to address the challenges faced by the bodies responsible for implementing the Protocol and monitoring of the implementation process. One of the most daunting challenges is the continuous massive increase in social media sites and programmes, and the number of users, especially children. Vigorous action has been taken to ensure that natural and legal persons comply with the provisions of the Protocol and to prosecute those who perpetrate offences. With a view to addressing this challenge, the competent authorities have developed effective mechanisms for striking a balance between, on the one hand, promoting and protecting freedom of expression and access to information, and, on the other, ensuring that natural and legal persons comply with the provisions of the Protocol and prosecuting those charged with perpetrating any legally defined offences. Technical support is sought from the Communications and Information Technology Commission, in accordance with article 14 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/17 of 8 Rabi' al-Awwal 1428 (27 March 2007), which stipulates that: "The Communications and Information Technology Commission shall, in accordance with its mandate, provide support and technical assistance to competent law enforcement authorities during the investigation of such offences and during the trial."

17. The availability of statistics and the standardization of concepts, mechanisms and methodological classification of data have a positive impact on action to monitor implementation of the Protocol. It should be noted that Council of Ministers Decision No. 11 of A.H. 13 Muharram 1437 (26 October 2015) approved the establishment of the General Authority for Statistics as a corporate body that enjoys financial and administrative independence. Its statistical work in the Kingdom is based on a comprehensive, accurate and standardized statistical system. The authority monitors its implementation and develops plans and programmes to meet statistical needs and to support development plans, scientific research and other activities.

II. Data

Data on the offences described in the Protocol

18. As noted in paragraph 17 of the report, steps will be taken to establish databases tailored to the requirements of human rights instruments to which the Kingdom is a party, including the Protocol. Some statistical data on the offences described in the Protocol will be included in this section.

(a) Sale of children

19. No offence involving the sale of children was recorded during the period covered by the report.

(b) Child prostitution

20. No offence involving child prostitution was recorded during the period covered by the report.

(c) Child pornography

21. A number of child pornography offences have been recorded. Child sexual exploitation on the Internet accounts for the majority of these offences. The Kingdom's legislation criminalizes the production, supply and possession of all pornographic photographs, printed material and videos. Many such items were confiscated and destroyed at border crossings and the smugglers were prosecuted. According to General Customs Authority statistics, 2,320 immoral items were seized in 2014 and 4,248 in 2015. The Ministry of Culture and Information confiscated 30 electronic pornographic games in 2016. Live pornographic performances are criminalized. The instructions and procedures applicable to live performances, especially for children, ensure that such performances are prohibited.

22. With regard to Internet sites, during the period from 2010 to late 2015 the Communications and Information Technology Commission handled more than 3.5 million pornographic links. By the end of 2015 it had blocked 2.65 million links. It also acted in coordination with a number of content-providing international companies to have pornography removed from their sites. A total of 54,312 electronic links were referred to cooperating sites.

23. A category was added to the national filtering list applied to child pornography links. A total of 510 such links were identified in 2015 and the law enforcement authorities were informed thereof. The Communications and Information Technology Commission took steps to remove more than 235,000 links from the various social media outlets.

24. The Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution investigated 121 cases involving child pornography and exploitation via the Internet and technical media in A.H. 1436 (2014) and A.H. 1437 (2015). The legal proceedings were conducted in accordance with the following table:

Years	*Number of cases investigated by the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution*
1436 (October 2014-October 2015)	36
1437 (October 2015-October 2016)	85

III. General measures of implementation

(a) Legislative framework for implementation of the Protocol

25. The Islamic sharia pays particular attention to children, assigning to them rights and duties. Their parents are required to look after them and to protect them from all kinds of risks. Any violation of a child's rights, the sale of children and all forms of exploitation of children are criminalized. Accordingly, child prostitution and pornography are serious crimes and grounds for harsher penalties. It should be noted that all acts of prostitution are criminalized in the Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions of the Islamic sharia.

26. The Basic Law of Governance provides for the protection of human rights. Article 26 stipulates that: "The State shall protect human rights in accordance with the Islamic sharia." Article 10 stipulates that: "The State shall seek to strengthen family bonds, to preserve its Arab and Islamic values, to ensure the welfare of all its members and to create conditions conducive to the development of their talents and abilities." The legislation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is based on the Islamic sharia, has criminalized the

sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Many measures, focusing on the three principles of prevention, protection and prosecution, have been taken to eliminate such crimes. The most important step taken was the promulgation of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act pursuant to Royal Decree No. M/40 of A.H. 21 Rajab 1430 (14 July 2009), which is consistent with international and regional norms aimed at combating trafficking in persons. Article 1 (1) of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act defines trafficking as: "The use, recruitment, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation." Article 2 prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual abuse, forced labour or services, begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, the removal of organs or the conduct of medical experimentation. The Act defines the various categories of offences that constitute trafficking in persons, and prescribes penalties of up to 15 years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to 1 million riyals (SRIs), which is equivalent to US$ 266,000. The Act seeks to raise the level of protection for victims in general and for women and children in particular. Article 4 prescribes a more severe penalty in any case where the victim of trafficking is a woman or a child. Article 5 stipulates that the victim's consent to any of the offences defined in the Act shall not be taken into account.

27. With a view to coordinating and bolstering national efforts to combat trafficking in persons, Council of Ministers Decision No. 244 was promulgated on A.H. 20 Rajab 1430 (13 July 2009). It established a Standing National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons in the Human Rights Commission, composed of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Culture and Information, and the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution. The Committee is one of the most important national mechanisms tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act. Its key functions include:

(a) Monitoring victims to ensure that they come to no further harm;

(b) Developing a policy of actively seeking out victims and training law enforcement officers in victim identification techniques;

(c) Coordinating with the competent authorities in order to return victims to their homes in the country of which they are nationals or, on request, to their place of residence in any other country;

(d) Recommending, if the situation so requires, that victims should be permitted to remain in the Kingdom and have their status regularized so that they can seek employment.

28. The criminal investigation authorities prosecute persons charged with committing human trafficking offences, referring them to the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution, which institutes proceedings against the accused before the competent courts. Many judgments have been handed down in such cases. The Standing National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, together with a number of governmental agencies and civil society institutions, monitor human trafficking offences, shelter the victims, offer them financial and legal assistance, and provide various social, psychological, educational and training services for victims and for the staff involved in their protection and rehabilitation.

29. The Protection from Abuse Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/52 of A.H. 15 Dhu al-Qa'da 1434 (21 September 2013), serves as an important national framework for combating various types of abuse; affording protection from abuse as well as assistance and treatment; providing shelter and social, psychological and health care for victims; taking statutory measures to hold the perpetrators criminally accountable; spreading awareness among the general public of the concept of abuse and its impact; and addressing behavioural phenomena in society which indicate the existence of an environment conducive to abuse. The Act requires all persons who become aware of a case of abuse to report it forthwith. There is also a special provision that requires all civil servants or military officers and all employees in the private sector who become aware of a case of abuse, in the context of their work, to inform their employer, who must then immediately inform the competent authority or the police of the case of abuse. It is not permissible under the Act to disclose the identity of the person who reports a case of abuse

unless the person consents to the disclosure or in the cases specified in the implementing regulations of the Act, which were promulgated by Ministerial Decision No. 43047 of A.H. 8 Jumada al-Ula 1435 (9 March 2014).

30. The Child Protection Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/14 of A.H. 3 Safar 1436 (25 November 2014), contains 25 articles. Article 2 reaffirms the provisions of the Islamic sharia and of the international treaties to which the Kingdom is a party, which safeguard children's rights and protect them from all forms of abuse and neglect. Article 9 stipulates that: "It is prohibited to exploit a child sexually, to expose him or her to sexual exploitation or to traffic a child for criminal purposes and begging." Article 12 prohibits the production, publication, presentation, circulation and possession of any printed or audiovisual material aimed at children with a view to shaping or arousing their instincts in a manner conducive to behaviour that violates the provisions of the Islamic sharia, that undermines public order or morals, or that encourages them to deviate from the right path.

31. The implementing regulations of the Child Protection Act, which were promulgated by Decision No. 56386 of the Minister of Labour and Social Development of A.H. 16 Jumada al-Tania 1436 (5 April 2015), provide for the protection of children from all manifestations of abuse and neglect to which they may be exposed in their environment (home, school, neighbourhood, public places, care home, educational establishment, alternative family, governmental and private institutions, etc.), by their guardians or by persons who have authority over or responsibility for the child or who have some other form of relationship with him. The rights of children who have suffered abuse or neglect are safeguarded by providing them with the requisite care, by raising awareness of their rights, especially those related to protection from abuse and neglect, and by seeking to take children's best interests into account in all relevant actions undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts, administrative authorities or other bodies. The implementing regulations also guarantee children's right to protection from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous, to interfere with their education, or to be harmful to their health or their physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. They prohibit the employment of children in any type of work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is conducted, may endanger their health, safety or morals. It is prohibited, in particular, to employ children in the worst forms of child labour, as defined in relevant international conventions.

32. According to article 2 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/17 of 8 Rabi' al-Awwal 1428 (26 March 2007), its objectives are to protect the public interest, public morals and decency and to safeguard persons, including children, from trafficking and sexual exploitation. Article 6 prescribes a term of up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to SRI 3 million (US$ 798,000) for the production, compilation, transmission or storage of material prejudicial to public order, religious values, public morals or the sacrosanct nature of private life through the Internet or a computer, for the creation of a website or the dissemination of information aimed at promoting or facilitating human trafficking, and for the creation, dissemination or promotion of material and data concerning pornography networks or activities conducive to indecent conduct. Article 8 prescribes a more severe penalty and fine if the offence is accompanied by "the luring and exploitation of minors and the like". Article 13 permits the confiscation of devices, programmes and other means used to commit the offences defined in the Act and the funds derived therefrom. Furthermore, the website or the centre providing such services may be closed down permanently or temporarily when it leads to the commission of such offences and when they are committed with the knowledge of the proprietor.

(b) Bodies responsible for implementation of the Protocol

33. A number of governmental bodies are directly or indirectly responsible for implementing the Protocol. Investigative bodies in the Ministry of the Interior are tasked with tracking information, conducting investigations and drawing conclusions. The Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution (the Public Prosecution Service) investigates offences related to the provisions of the Protocol and institutes legal proceedings against the

perpetrators. The judicial authorities rule on such cases and impose the penalties prescribed by the provisions of the Islamic sharia and relevant legislation.

34. A number of governmental bodies perform tasks that broadly reflect the provisions of the Protocol, for instance the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Culture and Information, and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Da'wah and Guidance. The Human Rights Commission is tasked with monitoring the bodies concerned to ensure that they take the requisite steps to implement the provisions of the Protocol and other international and regional human rights instruments to which the Kingdom has acceded. It is also tasked with disclosing infringements of the Kingdom's obligations under those instruments, reviewing existing legislation and proposing amendments in accordance with statutory procedures.

35. The Family Affairs Council was established by Council of Ministers Decision No. 443 of A.H. 20 Shawwal 1437 (27 July 2016). It is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Development and is tasked with overseeing family affairs in the Kingdom, enhancing the status of the family and its role in society, and maintaining strong and cohesive families that care for their children and are committed to religious and moral values and ideals. The Council comprises committees that deal with the rights of children, women and older persons.

36. The National Commission for Childhood, which was established pursuant to Council of Ministers Decision No. 238 of A.H. 14 Ramadan 1426 (17 October 2005), has developed public policies and strategic plans in the area of childcare and protection as well as procedures for monitoring their implementation. It has also developed child welfare programmes and projects in coordination with relevant governmental bodies, supported and coordinated the action undertaken by such bodies, recommended measures that they might take in their fields of competence, assisted them in planning programmes and activities aimed at enhancing child welfare, raised educational and social awareness of children's rights in order to ensure an appropriate response to the needs of different age groups, developed rules to protect children from abuse and monitored their implementation.

37. Many governmental bodies have set up human rights departments that coordinate their work on human rights issues and cases with the Human Rights Commission. The tasks of the human rights units in the Ministry of the Interior include measures to achieve the objectives of international human rights instruments, monitoring of compliance with obligations incurred under international human rights treaties to which the State is a party, raising awareness of the Ministry's human rights bodies by issuing bulletins and circulars, and organizing seminars and lectures. The Ministry of Justice has also established a Human Rights Department, which arranges for coordination between the Human Rights Commission, civil society institutions working in the field of human rights and the judiciary.

38. Governmental bodies receive support for implementation of the Protocol from civil society institutions, which are key partners in the promotion and protection of human rights. Many civil society institutions in the Kingdom work on behalf of children, women and the family. With a view to enhancing the role of civil society, the Civil Associations and Institutions Act was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/8 of A.H. 19 Safar 1437 (1 December 2015). It aims to promote, regulate and protect civil society activities, to support national development, to promote citizens' participation in the administration and development of society, to encourage voluntary work among members of civil society and to achieve social solidarity. The Act permits 10 persons to establish an association, compared with 20 persons previously, and to obtain the licences within 60 days of the date of submission of the application forms, thereby simplifying the procedures.

39. The National Society for Human Rights, which was established on A.H. 18 Muharram 1425 (9 March 2004), is one of the civil society associations that help to implement the Protocol. It is a monitoring body that enjoys financial and administrative independence and is not subject to the supervision or oversight of any governmental body. The performance of its functions and the determination and timing of its procedures are entirely independent. The Society has established mechanisms to receive complaints concerning human rights violations, including alleged violations of the Protocol. It should be noted that the General Assembly of the National Society of Human Rights, acting in

accordance with the mandate enshrined in its Statute, amended its Statute with a view to aligning it with the Paris Principles. The amendments were adopted at the seventeenth meeting of the General Assembly held on A.H. 25 Rabi' al-Thani 1436 (14 February 2015).

40. The Family Safety Programme was established pursuant to Royal Decree No. MB/1471 of A.H. 16 Shawwal 1426 (18 November 2005) to monitor and study cases of abuse, to report them to the competent authorities, and to raise awareness of the harm caused by violence and abuse. The Programme relies, inter alia, on the national health-sector register of cases of child abuse and neglect in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is an advanced electronic register that is used to post demographic, diagnostic and therapeutic data and reports from child protection centres on the Internet when cases of child abuse or neglect are monitored. It is continuously updated with a view to publishing annual statistics that help to provide a comprehensive overview for child protection strategy-makers in the Kingdom.

41. The Programme's child telephone helpline (116111) is a key mechanism aimed at providing support for children under the age of 18 who are subjected to abuse or neglect or exposed to problems that may affect their growth and development. The helpline provides free advisory services for children and their caregivers, and cases requiring an intervention are referred to the competent child welfare authorities.

42. A joint programme aimed at improving coordination between governmental bodies and civil society associations working on behalf of children was established by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the National Commission for Childhood. The Kingdom has provided it with annual financial support amounting to US$ 500,000 since 2007. The programme targets all stakeholders in areas involving children and provides for coordination among all partners. The series of programmes to which the joint project has given rise are listed in the Kingdom's combined third and fourth report concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2013). The report should be consulted because it contains detailed information reflecting the State's determination to improve coordination between government agencies and civil society organizations working on behalf of children.

(c) Dissemination of the Protocol and provision of training

43. In addition to the measures taken to raise awareness of the Protocol, which will be described later in the report, particular attention has been devoted to the dissemination of the Protocol and the provision of training by means of the following activities:

- Publication of the Protocol in Official Gazette No. 4318 of A.H. 3 Ramadan 1431 (13 August 2010);
- Circulation of Royal Decree No. M/38 of A.H. 18 Rajab 1431 (30 June 2010) approving the Kingdom's accession to the Protocol to relevant ministries and institutions with a view to having its provisions implemented;
- Promulgation of Royal Decree No. M/31 of A.H. 27 Jumada al-Ula 1434 (8 April 2013) concerning a Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Cooperation signed between the Kingdom, represented by the Human Rights Commission, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on A.H. 7 Sha'ban 1433 (27 June 2012). Its key objectives include: building the capacities of specialists in the field of international human rights law, especially with respect to United Nations mechanisms and the work of competent international organizations; preparation, development and implementation of specialized human rights training programmes within and outside the Kingdom; production of manuals containing guidelines for persons working in human rights bodies; and organization of human rights seminars and training courses. A briefing seminar on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols was held pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding on A.H. 12 and 13 Muharram 1437 (25 and 26 October 2015). It was attended by a number of judges and lawyers, and by representatives of relevant governmental bodies and civil society institutions. In addition, an advanced training course on the Convention and the Protocol was held

on A.H. 25 and 26 Dhu al-Qa'da 1437 (28 and 29 August 2016). It was attended by representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Panel of Experts, the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution, the National Commission for Childhood and the Human Rights Commission);

- Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Kingdom, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the United Nations on A.H. 22 Jumada al-Tania 1433 (2 May 2013) concerning the deployment of human rights experts to build the capacities of the Kingdom's specialists in the field of international human rights law, particularly with respect to mechanisms under the United Nations Young Professionals Programme;

- As part of the programme to build a human rights culture, the Human Rights Commission broadcast short films aimed at protecting human rights and demonstrating the risks of human rights violations. The awareness-raising programmes produced by competent bodies have enhanced the protection of children against trafficking, violence and other human rights violations, and have highlighted available remedies.

(d) The budget allocated to activities relating to implementation of the Protocol

44. The Government gives high priority to expenditure on the childhood sector. It is financed by a number of ministries, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and the Ministry of the Interior, and by the Human Rights Commission and other bodies. The aforementioned ministries account for the largest share of the total annual budget. The Ministry of Finance conducts an annual review of the financial statements on the budgets of the ministries and governmental institutions, thus achieving a high degree of financial management of the resources allocated to child welfare services in Saudi Arabia. As the procedures for preparing the State budget are based on general items covering all age groups, rather than on specific programmes, it is difficult to determine accurately the amount of funds allocated to programmes on behalf of children and the most needy segments of society. The fact that adults and children share the benefits from allocations to health-care, social and educational programmes and services makes it more difficult to determine such allocations. Expenditure on the childhood sector accounts for a large proportion of the budget allocated to the educational, health and social development sectors, which is shown in the following table:

Budget for the fiscal year 1438/1439 (2017)
Educational, health and social development sectors

Sectors	*Expenditure for the fiscal year 2016 (thousands of riyals)*	*Estimated expenditure for the fiscal year 2017 (thousands of riyals)*
Educational sector	207 144 501	200 329 066
Health and social development sector	124 835 481	120 419 691

(e) National plans and strategies for implementation of the Protocol

45. Council of Ministers Decision No. 308 of A.H. 18 Rajab 1437 (25 April 2016) issued the "Vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030", which contains development plans and programmes covering a broad range of economic and social sectors. The Vision comprises a number of human rights, primarily the following: the right to security, the right to health, the right to education and training, the right to work, protection of the family, empowerment of women, promotion of participation in political and public life, freedom of

association and support therefor, and the right to participate in cultural, sports, recreational and other activities.

46. With a view to building the capacities required to achieve the ambitious goals of the Vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030, Council of Ministers Decision No. 362 of A.H. 1 Ramadan 1437 (7 June 2016) approved the National Transformation Programme, which is applicable to 24 governmental bodies responsible for the economic and development sectors during the first year of the Programme. The Programme sets strategic objectives with interim targets for the year 2020. First-stage initiatives were launched in 2016 to achieve the objectives and targets. Other bodies will be involved in the subsequent annual stages. The Programme used innovative means to identify challenges and seize opportunities, to develop effective planning tools and encourage private-sector participation, to evaluate performance, and to develop interim targets for some of the Vision's strategic objectives, thereby establishing an effective base for the Government's work and promoting its sustainability through innovative methods of planning, implementation and oversight at the national level. The initiatives of relevance to children include the development of a strategy aimed at providing care for orphans with special needs, organizing the provision of social welfare services for persons with disabilities, orphans and juveniles in care facilities and institutions by means of a partnership between competent governmental and non-governmental bodies, developing kindergarten and nursery school programmes and extending such services to all parts of the Kingdom, and promoting the family's participation in education and its role in promoting national values and the national identity.

47. The National Childhood Strategy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has been implemented since 2013, serves as a reference and guidance framework for governmental and private-sector bodies operating in the area of children's affairs in the Kingdom. It meets all children's needs and focuses on providing a safe environment conducive to sound and appropriate growth and upbringing, as well as effective and comprehensive protection for children through the development of coherent legislation, policies and programmes. The National Childhood Strategy will address the physical, cognitive, social and emotional aspects of Saudi children's affairs for the next 10 years. The following are some of the most important programmes and projects:

- A project for a comprehensive national handbook on procedures to be followed in cases of neglect and abuse. All relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies participated in its production and it was published in 2016.
- A national project to address the phenomenon of bullying among peers in the Kingdom's public schools. It was launched in 2016 and training courses were provided for about 400 male and female counsellors.
- A project entitled "Towards a safe environment for children" to ensure the personal safety of children at the kindergarten stage, which was launched in 2016. A training kit on the personal safety of children was developed, and training was provided for a core team of about 140 kindergarten supervisors.

48. Royal Decree No. 13084, which was promulgated on A.H. 27 Rabi' al-Awwal 1436 (18 January 2015), provided for the development of a national strategy for the promotion and protection of human rights. The strategy, which is currently being prepared, is based on the principles of Islamic sharia, the Basic Law of Governance and other relevant legislation, human rights principles and standards, and relevant regional and international treaties ratified by the Kingdom.

49. The Human Rights Commission has produced a strategic action plan aimed at promoting respect for and protection of human rights, ensuring that they are recognized as an essential component and part of the national culture by governmental and non-governmental bodies in the performance of their duties, and establishing an effective partnership to spread and promote a culture of human rights among the various components of Saudi society.

(f) Participation of civil society in the implementation of the Protocol

50. The Government of the Kingdom, in addition to its responsibilities with respect to the protection and promotion of human rights, supports associations and institutions involved in the protection of human rights or operating in related areas. It also supports individual human rights activists, recognizing them as essential partners and enabling them to participate in drafting human rights laws and in relevant programmes and policies. For instance, non-governmental associations and civil society institutions can participate in the preparation of the Kingdom's reports to treaty bodies and its universal periodic review reports.

51. Furthermore, civil society institutions and human rights activists play a major role in promoting and protecting human rights on the ground by means of reports, press releases, articles and publications in the social media. The National Society for Human Rights publishes reports on the human rights situation in the Kingdom based on complaints received and violations detected. It assesses progress made and presents appropriate conclusions and recommendations. The Society also prepares studies and publishes information on specific cases. A number of human rights associations and institutions also prepare studies and organize seminars and informative events aimed at promoting and protecting the rights they support, without encountering any impediment. They are an established feature at rights-related conferences, seminars and other events. Their members are guaranteed the same legal remedies as other parties in the event of any violation of their rights.

52. One of the legislative measures adopted to enhance the role of civil society institutions was the promulgation of the Civil Associations and Institutions Act referred to in the second report. The Act aims to promote, regulate and protect civil society activities, to support national development, to promote citizens' participation in the administration and development of society, to encourage voluntary work among members of civil society and to achieve social solidarity.

53. When this report was submitted in A.H. Sha'ban 1438 (May 2017), 1,046 charitable associations and institutions in the Kingdom were active in the field of human rights or related areas. They received financial support from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development amounting to approximately SR1 600 million, which is equivalent to US$ 160 million. It should be noted that 28 civil associations and institutions were established after the promulgation of the Civil Associations and Institutions Act.

(g) Oversight and monitoring mechanisms

54. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development lists on its website the following bodies and mechanisms that receive notifications: the General Directorate for Social Protection, Social Protection Committees in the regions, regional emirates, the Human Rights Commission, the National Society for Human Rights, the Family Safety Programme, public and private hospitals, police stations, educational establishments and charitable associations. Reports of violence can also be submitted via the portal of the Ministry of the Interior or by email to the Ministry's Human Rights Department.

55. The Human Rights Commission plays an important role in oversight and monitoring of compliance with the Protocol pursuant to article 5 of its Statute. It monitors the implementation by governmental bodies of laws and regulations pertaining to human rights and the human rights treaties to which the Kingdom is a party, including the Protocol. The Commission also performs this mandate by receiving and monitoring complaints, undertaking visits and field trips, receiving information from governmental agencies and conducting other procedures.

56. The Division on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Internet was established in the Ministry of the Interior's Department for the Repression of Cybercrime on A.H. 21 Rabi' al-Awwal 1436 (12 January 2015). The Division's functions including receiving and taking action on communications, monitoring the Internet and the social media with a view to detecting criminal activities relating to child pornography, technical

processing of the data with a view to identifying sources that publish pornographic images and videos of children, and compiling of information to be transmitted to regional police squads so that they can produce the case file for referral to the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution.

57. Article 3 of the Protection from Abuse Act requires all persons who become aware of a case of abuse to report it forthwith. There is also a special provision that requires all civil servants or military officers and all employees in the private sector who become aware of a case of abuse, in the context of their work, to inform their employer, who must then immediately inform the competent authority or the police of the case of abuse. It is not permissible under the Act to disclose the identity of the person who reports a case of abuse unless the person consents to the disclosure or in the cases specified in the implementing regulations concerning article 5 of the Act.

58. The Practice of Health-care Professions Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/59 of A.H. 4 Dhu al-Qa'da 1426 (6 December 2005), requires health-care professionals to report any injury that might constitute a criminal offence under article 11 of the Act. The Act on Handling of Cases of Violence and Abuse in Health-care Facilities, which was promulgated by Ministerial Decision No. 24/56070 of A.H. 7 Sha'ban 1428 (20 August 2007), was distributed to all Ministry of Health directorates for health affairs in the Kingdom and led to the establishment of committees and task forces for protection against violence in health-care facilities. The most important action taken by these committees and task forces pursuant to the Act consists in providing immediate medical treatment for cases of violence and abuse, developing recovery plans and appropriate rehabilitation programmes, and informing the Social Protection Committees of cases of domestic violence within 48 hours. A Unit for Protection against Violence and Abuse in Health-care Facilities was established in 2011. Its main tasks are: to monitor the performance of committees and task forces for protection against violence and abuse in all health-care facilities; to compile and study statistics on violence; to develop training plans; and to promote the implementation of the agreement on a child helpline concluded between the Ministry of Health and the Child Helpline Supervisory Board in the Kingdom.

59. With a view to bolstering the mechanisms for receiving complaints of abuse and violence, the Centre for the Receipt of Communications was opened on A.H. 11 Jumada al-Tania 1437 (20 March 2016). The women staff members may be contacted around the clock on a single phone number (1919) to submit reports of domestic violence, and protection teams have been set up in all regions and governorates to receive reports.

60. During the period from A.H. 1430 to A.H. 1434 (2009 to 2013), the Ministry of Labour and Social Development received a total of 8,068 reports of abuse, i.e. an average of 1,614 reports each year. Sheltered accommodation was provided for 469 victims and the cases were addressed while they remained in the shelters. A total of 5,180 reports were received in A.H. 1435 (2014) and shelter was provided for 210 victims; 7,234 reports were received in A.H. 1436 (2015) and shelter was provided for 368 victims; 11,142 reports were received in A.H. 1437/1438 (2016) and shelter is currently being provided for 97 victims.

61. Action is taken under the Family Safety Programme to monitor and study cases of abuse, to report them to the competent authorities, and to raise awareness of the harm caused by violence and abuse. The Programme relies, inter alia, on the national health-sector register of cases of child abuse and neglect in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is an advanced electronic register that is used to post demographic, diagnostic and therapeutic data and reports from child protection centres on the Internet when cases of child abuse or neglect are monitored. It is continuously updated with a view to publishing annual statistics that help to provide a comprehensive overview for child protection strategy-makers in the Kingdom. The Programme's child telephone helpline (116111) is a key mechanism aimed at providing support for children under the age of 18 who are subjected to abuse or neglect or exposed to problems that may affect their growth and development. The helpline provides free advisory services for children and their caregivers, and cases requiring an intervention are referred to the competent child welfare authorities. It was decided that the helpline should be accessible 24 hours a day from the beginning of 2017.

62. The Ministry of Culture and Information reviews diverse information material in order to ensure that its content is free from the offences and infringements defined in the Kingdom's legislation and the Protocol. A number of bodies are tasked with detecting cybercrimes (criminal acts involving the use of computers or the Internet) related to child prostitution and child pornography with a view to instituting criminal proceedings against them. The Repression of Cybercrime Act prescribes a term of up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to SRI 3 million (US$ 798,000) for human traffickers and creators of pornography networks.

IV. Preventive measures

(a) Protection of children who are especially vulnerable to the offences described in the Protocol

63. Article 11 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that Saudi society shall be based on the religious devotion, charitable and pious cooperation, solidarity and unity of its members. Accordingly, the Government of the Kingdom believes that society plays a vital role in supporting the promotion and protection of human rights. Pursuant to the Child Protection Act, the interruption of a child's schooling, ill-treatment of children, the use of derogatory words that undermine their dignity, and discrimination against them on any racial, social or economic grounds constitute abuse or neglect. The Act therefore prevents the child from being exposed to human rights violations, including those described in the Protocol.

64. In addition, article 1 of the Protection from Abuse Act classifies as illegal abuse the failure or refusal of a person to meet his obligations and commitments to provide for the basic needs of members of his family or persons whose needs he is legally or statutorily obliged to meet. Article 10 of the Act also stipulates that victims' family situation and living conditions should be taken into account when providing treatment for the abuse to which they have been subjected.

65. Poverty is one of the key factors that render children vulnerable to human rights violations, including those described in the Protocol. Development plans are combined with social development strategies in the fight against poverty and its causes and consequences. They are based primarily on human rights norms and sustainable development standards, and comprise, in particular, the following measures:

- Development of a "Supplementary Support Programme" to bridge the gap between actual income and the poverty line, under which support of up to SRI 264 million, which is equivalent to US$ 70.4 million, is provided each year;
- Support for the Social Welfare Fund amounting to SRI 300 million annually, which is equivalent to US$ 80 million, in order to reduce poverty;
- Increased allocations for orphans and people with special needs amounting to SRI 82 million, which is equivalent to US$ 21.8 million; the allocations comprise foster family benefits, educational allowances, end-of-fostering benefits, and benefits for those residing in orphanages;
- Establishment of an "emergency assistance" programme for needy families who are facing critical emergencies that cause increased suffering or who are exposed to problems such as the death, imprisonment or illness of the breadwinner, illness of children, fire in the home, natural disasters, etc.;
- An increase in annual allocations to charities from SRI 100 million, which is equivalent to US$ 26.6 million, to SRI 450 million, which is equivalent to US$ 120 million.

66. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development oversees two programmes on behalf of orphans. One is the **Foster Families Programme**, under which families provide comprehensive and lasting care for orphans, ensuring that they enjoy psychological security and emotional contentment, and refining their social customs and values. The orphan child

is thus a member of the foster family. The second is the **Friendly Family Programme**, which is designed to cater for orphans who were not afforded the opportunity to be fostered and who are looked after on a part-time basis by families wishing to undertake such care. Under this system a family in the community contacts one or more orphans living in an orphanage with a view to hosting them for a set period of time, such as for holidays (feast days, weekends or summer holidays). After the holiday or set period ends, the child returns to the orphanage. In addition, basic regulations governing social care facilities were issued with a view to ensuring that orphans are treated in such facilities in a manner similar to children in normal homes accommodating not more than eight persons. Moreover, the services must be provided by specialized staff.

67. Child begging may also lead to the commission of an offence described in the Protocol. The Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act, referred to in the report, criminalizes the exploitation of children through begging and makes it an aggravating circumstance. The Kingdom has also submitted its views concerning the draft general comment on children in street situations.

(b) Promotion of public awareness of the consequences of the offences described in the Protocol

68. In addition to what was stated in paragraph 43 concerning action to disseminate and provide training in the Protocol, the National Commission for Childhood has undertaken a number of activities aimed at raising awareness of the consequences of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in cooperation and partnership with relevant governmental bodies, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Family Safety Programme, the King Abdulaziz Public Library and the Human Rights Commission, and civil society institutions such as the National Society for Human Rights and other associations working on behalf of children. These partnerships have generated awareness of children's rights and of the gravity of such offences in official and community circles. The partnership programmes included the following activities:

- The regular organization of festivals and exhibitions;
- The organization of awareness-raising workshops and lectures;
- The issuance of awareness-raising publications, some of which described the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols in simplified and comprehensible language. Others were designed to serve as guidebooks for people working with children, including representatives of governmental bodies, members of civil society organizations and heads of households.

69. The National Commission for Childhood has also developed and implemented, in cooperation with various bodies, a series of preventive, educational and training programmes in the area of child protection, including protection from the offences described in the Protocol, as part of a joint project conducted by the National Committee for Childhood and UNICEF, for which the Kingdom provided US$ 500,000 of support each year from 2007 to 2016.

70. The Human Rights Commission also implements programmes and activities designed to raise awareness of human rights, including the rights of children, and to warn against violations of such rights. The Commission has implemented two stages of the Programme for the Promotion of a Human Rights Culture adopted by Royal Decree No. MB/8628 of 24 Shawwal 1430 (13 October 2009). A number of relevant governmental bodies participated in its implementation by drawing up a plan based on diverse principles. They sought, in particular: to contribute to the implementation of the Kingdom's obligations under the human rights conventions to which it is a party; to address social problems pertaining to human rights violations or misconduct; and to focus on key human rights content and norms. Furthermore, as already mentioned in the report, the Commission, acting as the Kingdom's representative, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OHCHR in 2012 with a view to building the capacities of specialists in the field of

international human rights law, especially with respect to United Nations mechanisms and the work of competent international organizations, preparing, developing and implementing specialized human rights training programmes within and outside the Kingdom, and producing manuals containing guidelines for persons working in human rights bodies. The activities undertaken in 2016 under the Memorandum included a seminar, a training course and a workshop, which addressed matters such as combating trafficking in persons, the work of national human rights institutions, fair trial guarantees and other issues.

71. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia held the National Forum for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Internet from A.H. 15-17 Safar 1438 (15-17 November 2016), under the patronage of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, the Minister of the Interior, who participated in the Forum. The Forum addressed a number of important topics related to crimes of child sexual exploitation on the Internet and how they may be prevented. Research papers were presented by national and international experts and by national, regional and international bodies and institutions specializing in action to combat such crimes, such as the Communications and Information Technology Commission and Interpol. The following are some of the key recommendations adopted by the Forum: establishment of an e-safety centre along the lines of those existing in many countries throughout the world; convening of similar forums on a regular basis; monitoring of national legislation and applicable international standards; development of means and procedures for receiving communications, and facilitating their use, access thereto and awareness thereof; adoption of legislative measures based on international standards to combat child pornography and sexual exploitation of children via the Internet; full implementation and oversight of the recommendations adopted at the Global Summit on Tackling Online Child Sexual Exploitation held in London in December 2014 and the Second Global Summit on Ending Online Child Sexual Exploitation held in the United Arab Emirates in 2015; promotion of international cooperation with a view to expanding the scope of technical and informational exchanges on the identity of persons and the devices used for child pornography on the Internet to include digital evidence and judicial decisions; and building of effective partnerships between the public and private sectors in order to create a secure and child-friendly electronic environment. The Forum was attended by a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations. The following website may be consulted for additional information on the Forum and the research papers presented: www.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/departments.

72. The National Family Safety Programme has organized a series of advanced training courses for professionals on domestic violence and child abuse. The courses target diverse sectors including physicians, mental health professionals, law enforcement personnel, investigators, judges and social welfare specialists. The following are some of the key activities conducted under the Programme:

- A training course on criminal proceedings in cases of child abuse;
- A training course for social welfare specialists on basic skills for handling issues of domestic violence;
- A multidisciplinary course for professionals dealing with cases of child abuse and neglect;
- An advanced course for physicians on the skills required to treat cases of child abuse and neglect;
- A specialized training course for public prosecutors and law enforcement personnel on legal proceedings and litigation in cases involving violence against children;
- A training course for officials in decision-making positions on prevention of violence against women.

73. Several other governmental bodies, such as the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Ministry of Education, also conduct periodic campaigns to raise awareness of sound upbringing and educational procedures for addressing and remedying behavioural problems among children. The campaigns highlight the serious consequences of violations of children's rights, including the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development organizes programmes and seminars to

raise awareness of the dangers of sexual exploitation. A number of programmes on the treatment and rehabilitation of children were held during A.H. 1436 (2014), for example:

Programme	*Implementing authority*	*Target group*
Child awareness-raising against sexual harassment	Al-Dera'iya Social Development Centre	Families, children, schools
Risks of sexual harassment of children	Medina Social Development Centre	Families, children, schools
Social campaign against sexual harassment	Arar Social Development Centre	Families, children, schools
Raising children's awareness of the danger of sexual harassment	Jeddah Social Development Centre	Families, children, schools
Awareness-raising programme to combat child sexual harassment	Riyadh Social Development Centre	Families, children, schools
Sex education and children's behavioural problems	The Mother and Child Education Programme was held in 19 centres in the Kingdom	Families

74. A cognitive training programme was launched to enable mothers to provide their children with basic pre-school skills. The programme helps mothers to play their educational role, raises their awareness of methods of positive interaction with their children, and clarifies their role in the family and society. The programme deals with many topics, in particular: children's development and the role of the family; children's physical development; children's cognitive development; children's emotional development; negative approaches to children's upbringing; and sex education.

75. In line with the role of civil society organizations in promoting awareness of children's rights, the National Society for Human Rights has published booklets (The Convention on the Rights of the Child; The Rights of the Child in Islam) and a magazine on human rights based on the slogan "Know your rights and their colour", which raises children's awareness of their rights by means of expressive drawings, colouring and pictures, instructive sentences and posters. The Society also organizes workshops and awareness-raising programmes, training courses and campaigns on children's rights for both children and their parents or guardians.

V. Prohibition of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

(a) Criminal laws that prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

76. The sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography are criminalized by the provisions of the Islamic sharia and by the following criminal legislation, which includes definitions of these offences and prescribes penalties for the perpetrators:

- The Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act;
- The Child Protection Act and its implementing regulations;
- The Protection from Abuse Act and its implementing regulations;
- The Repression of Cybercrime Act.

It should be noted that when the Kingdom acceded to the Protocol it became part of the country's legislation and enjoys the same legal status.

(b) Material elements of the offences described in the Protocol

77. Article 2 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that: "All forms of trafficking in persons are prohibited, including coercion, intimidation, fraud, deception, abduction, exploitation of one's office or influence, abuse of power or exploitation of vulnerability, giving or receiving payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of sexual abuse, forced labour or services, begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, the removal of organs or the conduct of medical experimentation."

78. Article 1 (1) of the Child Protection Act defines a child as "any person under the age of 18" and prohibits "all forms of abuse or exploitation of children or the threat thereof, including physical, psychological and sexual abuse, and exposure of a child to any form of sexual assault, abuse or exploitation". Article 9 prohibits "sexual exploitation of a child, exposure of a child to forms of sexual exploitation, or trafficking in children for criminal purposes or begging". Article 12 prohibits "the production, publication, display, dissemination and possession of any printed or audible work aimed at children, the purpose of which is to arouse their instincts in a manner that incites behaviour contrary to the provisions of the Islamic sharia or to public order or morals, or that encourages delinquency".

79. Article 6 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act criminalizes and punishes the creation of a site on the Internet or a computer or the dissemination of material for the purpose of human trafficking or its facilitation, and the creation of pornographic material and data. Article 9 stipulates that: "Anyone who instigates or assists others or conspires with them to commit any of the offences defined in this Act shall be liable to the following penalties: if the offence was committed as a result of such instigation, assistance or conspiracy, the person shall be liable to the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence; if the offence was not committed, the person shall be liable to half the maximum penalty prescribed for the principal offence." Article 10 stipulates that: "Anyone who attempts to commit any of the offences defined in this Act shall be liable to half the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence."

80. Article 1 of the Protection from Abuse Act defines abuse as all forms of exploitation or physical, psychological or sexual abuse or the threat thereof committed by one person against another and overstepping the bounds of the former's guardianship, authority or responsibility over the latter or the bonds of a family relationship or a relationship of support, sponsorship, tutelage or dependency. The Act also classifies as abuse the failure or refusal of a person to meet his obligations or commitments to provide for the basic needs of the members of his family or those whose needs he is legally or statutorily obliged to meet. Article 11 of the Act states that if the Ministry (the Ministry of Labour and Social Development) considers that the act of abuse constitutes an offence, it shall report it to the competent investigative authority (the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution) so that it may take the necessary legal action.

(c) Maximum and minimum penalties and aggravating circumstances

81. Article 3 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that: "Anyone who commits the offence of trafficking in persons shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of up to 15 years and/or to a fine of up to SRI 1 million (US$ 266,000)." Article 4 of the same Act also stipulates that: "Harsher penalties are prescribed in the following cases:

- Where the offence is committed by an organized criminal group;
- Where the offence is committed against a woman or a person with special needs;
- Where the offence is committed against a child, even if the offender was unaware that the victim was a child;

- Where the perpetrator of the offence uses or threatens to use a weapon;
- Where the perpetrator of the offence is the victim's spouse, ascendant, descendant or guardian, or where he has authority over the victim;
- Where the perpetrator of the offence is a law enforcement officer;
- Where the offence is committed by more than one person;
- Where the offence is transnational;
- Where the victim suffers grave harm or a permanent disability as a result of the offence."

82. Article 8 of the Act stipulates that: "Anyone who participates in any offence of trafficking in persons, and anyone who intervenes in any of the offences defined in articles 2, 4 and 6 shall be liable to the penalty applicable to the perpetrator." Article 9 stipulates that: "Anyone who acquires, conceals or disburses items derived from one of the offences defined in this Act, who knowingly conceals one or more persons who participated in the offence with a view to assisting them in evading justice, or who helps to conceal evidence of the offence shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of up to 5 years and/or to a fine of up to SRI 200,000 (US$ 53,333)." Article 10 stipulates that: "Anyone who attempts to commit any of the offences defined in articles 2, 4 and 6 of this Act shall be liable to the full penalty prescribed for the offence."

83. In line with the Kingdom's policy aimed at the prevention of crime, article 12 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that: "Any perpetrator who informs the competent authorities about an offence prior to its commission with a view to revealing it in advance, having the perpetrators arrested or preventing its commission shall be exempt from the penalties prescribed for the offences defined in this Act. If the information is received after the offence is perpetrated, the source may be exempted from the penalty if the competent authorities succeed in arresting the other perpetrators before the investigation is launched. If the information is received during the investigation, the penalty may be commuted."

84. As mentioned earlier in the report, article 6 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act prescribes a term of up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to SRI 3 million (US$ 798,000) for a number of offences defined in the article, including: the creation of a website or the dissemination of information aimed at promoting or facilitating human trafficking, and the creation of material and data concerning pornography networks. Article 8 of the Act stipulates that: "The penalty of imprisonment or the fine shall not be less than one half of the maximum penalty if the offence is accompanied by any of the following circumstances:

- If the perpetrator committed the offence as part of an organized gang;
- If the perpetrator is a civil servant and the offence is related to his duties or if he exploits his authority or influence to commit the offence;
- If the offence involves the luring and exploitation of minors and the like;
- If the perpetrator was previously convicted locally or abroad of similar offences."

85. As mentioned earlier in the report, article 9 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act stipulates that: "Anyone who instigates or assists others or conspires with them to commit any of the offences defined in this Act shall be liable to the following penalties: if the offence was committed as a result of such instigation, assistance or conspiracy, the person shall be liable to the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence; if the offence was not committed, the person shall be liable to half the maximum penalty prescribed for the principal offence." Article 10 stipulates that: "Anyone who attempts to commit any of the offences defined in this Act shall be liable to half the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence." Article 12 stipulates that: "This Act shall be implemented without prejudice to the provisions of other relevant legislation, particularly with regard to intellectual property rights, and relevant international conventions to which the Kingdom is a party."

86. Article 23 of the Child Protection Act requires the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution to investigate any violations of the provisions of the Act and to institute proceedings before the competent court, which considers the violations, taking into account the provisions of other relevant legislation, and sentences the perpetrator to the appropriate penalty. Article 13 of the Protection from Abuse Act prescribes a penalty of imprisonment for a period of not less than one month and not more than one year, and/or a fine of not less than SRI 5,000 and not more than SRI 50,000 for anyone who commits one of the acts of abuse defined in the Act. In the event of recidivism, the penalty shall be doubled. The competent court may also hand down alternative penalties to deprivation of liberty.

(d) Statute of limitations for the offences

87. No statute of limitations is applicable in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to any of the offences described in the Protocol.

(e) Other relevant offences

88. Many legal provisions criminalize acts that have a bearing on implementation of the Protocol, which criminalizes the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Certain acts impede the achievement of the aim of criminalization and punishment by perverting the course of justice, leading to impunity, or falling within the concept of abuse of power, which contributes to an enabling environment for such offences. The Kingdom's legislation has therefore criminalized such acts and prescribed appropriate penalties. For example, article 6 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act stipulates that: "A term of up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to SRI 200,000 (US$ 53,325) shall be imposed on: 1. Anyone who uses physical force, threats, intimidation or denial of an entitlement, or who promises, offers or grants an undue entitlement with a view to inciting a person to provide false testimony, to interfere with the provision of testimony, or to present false evidence relating to the commission of any of the offences defined in this Act; 2. Anyone who uses physical force or intimidation to interfere with the performance by a judicial officer or a law enforcement officer of his official duties in connection with any of the offences defined in this Act." Article 7 of the Act stipulates that: "Anyone who is aware of the commission of an offence defined in this Act or of an attempt to commit it, and who is responsible for professional secrecy, or who obtains, directly or indirectly, information or instructions relating thereto and fails to inform the competent authorities forthwith, shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of up to two years and/or a fine of up to SRI 100,000 (US$ 26,662)."

89. The offences of abuse and neglect have a bearing on implementation of the Protocol, since they may involve exposure of the child to the offences described in the Protocol. Many legislative and procedural measures have been adopted to combat these offences and their causes, in particular:

- Promulgation of the Protection from Abuse Act and its implementing regulations;
- Promulgation of the Child Protection Act and its implementing regulations;
- Establishment of the General Directorate for Social Protection in the Ministry of Labour and Social Development by Ministerial Decision No. SH/10771/1 of A.H. 1 Safar 1425 (20 April 2004) on behalf of women and child victims of domestic violence;
- Establishment of social protection units, which are shelters for women and child victims of domestic violence;
- Establishment of child protection centres, which seek to support children's best interests, to protect them from all forms of abuse and neglect, to safeguard their rights, and to raise their awareness of children's rights;
- Establishment of 12 social protection units and 10 protection teams to receive and handle reports;

- Establishment of 17 protection committees in different parts of the Kingdom to deal with cases of domestic violence;
- Opening of nine centres to shelter victims of abuse in cooperation with civil society institutions;
- Action is currently being taken to implement the comprehensive national strategy to address the problem of domestic violence developed by the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology.

90. Article 2 of the Anti-Money-Laundering Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/31 of A.H. 11 Jumada al-Ula 1433 (3 April 2012), criminalizes a number of acts deemed to stem from criminal acts or from illegal or illegitimate sources. Article 2 (2) of the implementing regulations specifies criminal activities and illegal or illegitimate sources, the use of funds from which constitutes money laundering. Paragraph (i) thereof reads as follows: "Pimping, preparing places for prostitution, or habitual practice of debauchery and sexual exploitation, including sexual exploitation of children."

(f) Criminal liability of legal persons

91. Criminal legislation in the Kingdom provides for the criminal liability of legal persons for the offences described in the Protocol. Thus, article 13 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that: "Without prejudice to the responsibility of a natural person, if the offence of trafficking in persons is committed by a legal person, for its benefit or on its behalf and with its knowledge, the legal person shall be liable to a fine of up to SRI 10 million (US$ 2.660 million). The competent court may order its dissolution or closure, or the temporary or permanent closure of one of its branches." Article 1 (1) of the Repression of Cybercrime Act defines a person who is liable to be punished for cybercrimes as any natural person or any public or private legal person. Article 3 of the Anti-Money-Laundering Act, referred to earlier in this report, stipulates that: "A person or entity shall be deemed a money launderer if the person or entity perpetrates or participates in any of the acts specified in article 2 of this Act, including financial institutions, designated non-financial businesses and professions, and non-profit-making organizations, as well as chairs and members of the board of directors, owners, employees, authorized representatives, auditors or hired hands of such entities who act in such capacities, without prejudice to the criminal liability of the entities if the crime is committed in their names or on their behalf."

(g) Guardianship

92. The legislation concerning guardianship in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on the provisions of the Islamic sharia. It therefore guarantees and promotes care for children whose parents are unknown. The same applies to the case of children whose family provider has been missing for more than a year and who have no caregiver. Their status in terms of guardianship is then deemed to be similar to that of orphans and major provision is made for their welfare.

93. The natural family is the first option, since it is the appropriate care-giving environment for orphan children. Another solution is to place children in residential care, although this is regarded as a last resort when social research determines the absence of a family environment among relatives or of any foster family. To that end, the Department for Orphan Guardianship Affairs in the Ministry of Labour and Social Development oversees the Foster Families Programme and the Friendly Family Programme, referred to earlier in this report, as follows:

- **The Foster Families Programme**: This Programme enables families to provide comprehensive and lasting care for orphans, ensuring that they enjoy psychological security and emotional contentment, and refining their social customs and values. The orphan child is thus a member of the foster family.

- **The Friendly Family Programme**: This Programme is designed to cater for orphans who were not afforded the opportunity to be fostered and who are looked after on a part-time basis by families wishing to undertake such care. Under this system a family in the community contacts one or more orphans living in an orphanage with a view to hosting them for a set period of time, such as for holidays (feast days, weekends or summer holidays). After the holiday or set period ends, the child returns to the orphanage.

(h) Laws prohibiting the dissemination of material advertising the offences described in the Protocol

94. Article 12 stipulates that: "It is prohibited to produce, publish, present, circulate and possess any printed or audiovisual material aimed at children with a view to shaping or arousing their instincts in a manner conducive to behaviour that violates the provisions of the Islamic sharia, that undermines public order or morals, or that encourages them to deviate from the right path." As mentioned earlier in the report, article 6 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act prescribes a term of up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to SRI 3 million for a number of offences defined in the article, including the creation of a website or the dissemination of information aimed at promoting or facilitating human trafficking, and the creation of material and data concerning pornography networks, including online advertising. Article 9 of the Act stipulates that: "Anyone who instigates or assists others or conspires with them to commit any of the offences defined in this Act shall be liable to the following penalties: if the offence was committed as a result of such instigation, assistance or conspiracy, the person shall be liable to the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence; if the offence was not committed, the person shall be liable to half the maximum penalty prescribed for the principal offence."

95. Article 9 of the Printed Materials and Publication Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/32 of A.H. 3 Ramadan 1421 (29 November 2000), prohibits the publication of any material that contravenes the provisions of the Islamic sharia or the legislation in force, and the encouragement or exhortation thereof.

96. With regard to the effectiveness of laws prohibiting the dissemination of material advertising the offences described in the Protocol, the legislation has proved quite effective in combating such offences in practice. However, certain factors pose a challenge when it comes to implementing the legislation and the Protocol, in particular the exponential expansion of the Internet due to the rapid development of information and communications technology, the spread of electronic hacking, and the need to boost international cooperation in combating such crimes. All of this makes it more difficult to ensure the integrity of material advertised on the Internet and increases the possibility of impunity. Inadequate awareness of the risks posed by the Internet, and families' reluctance to meet their responsibility to protect children from such risks constitute additional challenges.

(i) Jurisdiction

97. The Protocol is implemented in all regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia without exception, and jurisdiction over criminal offences, including those specified in the Protocol, is based on the principle of legal personality and the principle of territoriality, in accordance with the Judiciary Act, the Code of Sharia Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure, specifically as follows:

- When the offence is committed in, or when its outcome or consequences extend into the territory of the Kingdom, the jurisdiction of the courts, pursuant to article 130 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, is determined by the locality of the offence or the locality where the accused resides or, if he has no known residence, the locality in which he was arrested. The locality of an offence is any locality in which one of the acts was committed, or in which an act was required, the omission of which caused physical harm, in accordance with article 131 of the Code of Criminal Procedure;

- When the offence occurs on board a ship or aircraft carrying the flag of the Kingdom;
- When the offence is committed by a Saudi national, even if there is no record of his general or designated place of residence in the Kingdom, in accordance with article 24 of the Code of Sharia Procedure;
- When the offence occurs outside the Kingdom and constitutes an attack on the interests of the State, such as in the case of State security offences, counterfeiting of money, and drug smuggling;
- When the offence is committed by an alien who has a general or designated place of residence in the Kingdom, in accordance with article 25 of the Code of Sharia Procedure;
- When the lawsuit involves property located in the Kingdom, or when it is filed against more than one person and one of them has a place of residence in the Kingdom, in accordance with article 26 of the Code of Sharia Procedure.

(j) Extradition of accused persons

98. Article 42 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that domestic legislation and international agreements shall specify the rules and procedures for the extradition of ordinary criminals. Accordingly, the extradition of persons accused of any offence, including those described in the Protocol, occurs in accordance with agreements concluded by the Kingdom with States based on the principle of reciprocity. The Kingdom has acceded to a number of regional instruments on the extradition of offenders and judicial cooperation, concluded a number of bilateral agreements on security-based and judicial cooperation, and enforced judgments, letters rogatory and judicial notices. Some of the agreements provide for the extradition of offenders and accused persons. The most important of them will be mentioned in the section on international assistance and cooperation.

99. The Kingdom did not receive any request for the extradition of persons accused of committing one or more of the offences referred to in the Protocol during the period covered by the report.

(k) Seizure and confiscation of materials used to commit offences described in the Protocol as well as proceeds derived therefrom and closure of the premises

100. Article 11 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act, promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/40 of A.H. 21 Rajab 1430 (14 July 2009), stipulates that: "The competent court may, in all cases, confiscate private funds, property, tools and other items that have been used or prepared for use in the commission of the offence of trafficking in persons or that have been acquired therefrom." Article 13 of the Act stipulates that: "Without prejudice to the responsibility of a natural person, if the offence of trafficking in persons is committed by a legal person, for its benefit or on its behalf and with its knowledge, the legal person shall be liable to a fine of up to SRI 10 million (US$ 2.660 million). The competent court my order its dissolution or closure, or the temporary or permanent closure of one of its branches."

101. Article 13 of the Repression of Cybercrime Act stipulates that: "Without prejudice to the rights of bona fide persons, the competent court may confiscate devices, programmes and other means used to commit the offences defined in the Act or the funds derived therefrom. It may also order that the website or centre providing such services should be closed down permanently or temporarily in cases where it led to the commission of such offences and where they were committed with the knowledge of the proprietor."

102. Article 60 of the implementing regulations of the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that: "If the items seized during the investigation are subject to confiscation, the

investigator shall issue an order of impoundment." Article 61 stipulates that: "If possession of the seized items is legally or statutorily prohibited, or is subject to confiscation, the investigator shall take the necessary steps to destroy them or to order their confiscation, as the case may be."

103. The Anti-Money-Laundering Act, referred to earlier in this report, provides for the confiscation of funds, proceeds and means used in the commission of an offence as a supplementary penalty. Article 18 of the Act stipulates that: "Without prejudice to the rights of bona fide persons, anyone who commits an offence of money laundering, as defined in article 2 of this Act, shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of up to 10 years and/or to a fine of up to SRI 5 million (US$ 1.330 million), as well as to confiscation of funds, proceeds and means associated with the offence. If the funds and proceeds are combined with funds acquired from legitimate sources, the proportion of the funds that is equivalent to the estimated value of the illegitimate proceeds shall be subject to confiscation."

VI. Protection of the rights and interests of victims

(a) Measures adopted to protect victims

104. In addition to the information contained in this report and in the Kingdom's combined third and fourth reports concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child concerning provisions aimed at protecting child victims of offences, including the offences described in the Protocol, the Kingdom's legislation provides for appropriate measures to protect the rights and interests of child victims of practices prohibited under the Protocol at all stages of judicial proceedings. For instance, article 5 of the Child Protection Act stipulates that: "The child shall, in all cases, be given priority in terms of protection, care and relief." Article 6 of the Act stipulates that: "The child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse or neglect." Article 16 requires all parties to take children's interests into account in all relevant procedures and to expedite their completion. They must also take into account their mental, psychological, physical and educational needs, in accordance with their age, health and other factors.

105. Criminal legislation also contains provisions aimed at protecting children's rights in the context of judicial proceedings. For instance, article 15 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that: "The following procedures shall be adopted at the investigation or trial stage with respect to victims of an offence of trafficking in persons:

- Aggrieved parties shall be informed of their legal rights in a language that they understand;
- They shall be given the opportunity to declare their status, including as victims of trafficking in persons, and likewise their legal, physical and social status;
- They shall be presented to a competent physician if they prove to be in need of medical or psychological care or if they so request;
- They shall be admitted to a medical, psychological or social rehabilitation centre if their medical or psychological condition or their age so requires;
- They shall be admitted to a specialized centre if they are in need of shelter;
- They shall be provided, if necessary, with security protection;
- If the victim is a foreigner and must remain in the Kingdom or work during the course of the investigation or trial, the public prosecutor or the competent court may assess the situation."

106. Article 148 of the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that: "If the person who has suffered harm as a result of a criminal offence lacks legal capacity and has no guardian or trustee, the court in which the criminal action has been filed shall appoint a person to pursue his private right of action." Article 16 of the Code stipulates that: "The victim or his representative and his heirs are entitled to institute criminal proceedings with respect to all

cases involving a private right of action, and to pursue such proceedings before the competent court. The competent court shall summon the public prosecutor to appear before it."

(b) Training for persons who work with victims of the offences described in the Protocol

107. The Ministry of Justice has taken a number of measures aimed at familiarizing judges with human rights in accordance with international standards. Council of Ministers Decision No. 162, which was promulgated on A.H. 24 Rabi' al-Thani 1435 (24 February 2014), provided for the establishment of a centre for judicial training attached to the Ministry of Justice for the purpose of training and building the capacities of judges, notaries public, clerks and other officials. A total of 134 judges received training in how to deal with cases of domestic violence. The Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution also conducted training programmes on the rights of the child. It should be noted that members of the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution are required to complete a one-year diploma programme in criminal science before taking up employment. The programme covers the legal foundations and rules for conducting investigations, including interrogation and related safeguards. Furthermore, members of the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution attend regular in-service training courses.

108. Public Security holds numerous specialized training courses for its personnel as part of the annual training programme. A total of 1,815 staff members attended training courses between A.H. 1433 (2012) and A.H. 1436 (2015). A Legal Day has been arranged on which training courses to spread a human rights culture are held. More than 1,100 trainees benefited from the programme in 2015. Furthermore, Public Security held a seminar entitled "Security and human rights" in 13 regions and governorates to raise public awareness of human rights. More than 1,000 participants from all Public Security sectors took part in the seminars. Public Security courses deal with a number of topics, such as human rights principles, combating human trafficking crimes, and procedures for dealing with cases of domestic violence.

109. The Kingdom signed an agreement with the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, which is attached to the League of Arab States, on the organization of special human rights training courses for law enforcement officers. The courses focus on criminal law and the officers are given the opportunity to continue their studies at a higher level, familiarizing themselves in particular with human rights standards. One of the courses dealt with criminal procedures in child abuse cases (2011). The Security Training Institute at King Fahd Security College runs a six-month diploma course, entitled "Criminal justice and human rights", for personnel of the Kingdom's law enforcement agencies, which focuses on international human rights standards and their application at the national level.

110. The Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the National Guard and the Ministry of the Interior have incorporated human rights principles and children's rights in the curricula of their military colleges and educational institutions, which include courses on human rights and international humanitarian law.

111. The National Commission for Childhood has organized a series of training workshops to raise the awareness of staff who work with children and who are involved in implementing international treaties.

112. The Human Rights Commission has organized a series of human rights training programmes within the Kingdom and abroad as well as awareness-raising programmes and activities under the Memorandum on Cooperation signed with OHCHR in 2012. The objectives of the Memorandum on Cooperation are: to build the capacities of specialists in the field of international human rights law, especially with respect to United Nations mechanisms and the work of competent international organizations; to develop and implement specialized human rights training programmes within and outside the Kingdom; to produce manuals containing guidelines based on relevant international norms for the staff of human rights bodies; and to organize human rights seminars, conferences, training courses and workshops for the staff of various human rights bodies and civil society

institutions in the Kingdom. The following table shows some of the key seminars, training courses and workshops held pursuant to the Memorandum:

Key activities undertaken by the Human Rights Commission in cooperation with UNHCR pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding referred to in this report

Subject matter of the seminar or course	*Date on which it was held*	*Target groups*
Successful State practices in combating human trafficking	March 2014	Government officials
Work of international mechanisms for the protection of human rights	March 2014	Government officials, lawyers, human rights defenders
Training of human rights trainers (1)	December 2014	Government officials, lawyers, human rights defenders
Training of human rights trainers (2)	February 2015	Government officials, lawyers, human rights defenders
Seminar on the Convention on the Rights of the Child	October 2015	General public
Organization of a training programme for trainers on combating human trafficking	April 2016	Representatives of governmental bodies on the Standing National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons
Review of the complaints manual on techniques for investigating human rights violations	May 2016	Human Rights Commission specialists responsible for receiving, monitoring and investigating complaints
Preparation of a national plan to follow up recommendations from the universal periodic review mechanism and treaty bodies, and to prepare human rights indicators for trainees	July 2016	Representatives of governmental bodies on the Standing Committee for the Preparation of Reports and Human Rights Commission specialists
Workshop on the Convention on the Rights of the Child	October 2016	Representatives of governmental bodies on the Standing Committee for the Preparation of Reports and Human Rights Commission specialists
International fair trial standards	October 2016	Judges
Training programme on human rights and the work of national human rights institutions	November 2016	Members of the Human Rights Commission and their associates

Key training courses and seminars held by the Ministry of Justice in 2016

Title of the seminar or course	*Number of courses*	*Target group*
Domestic violence programme	6	Staff of the Ministry of Justice
Programme on the trial of minors	2	Staff of the Ministry of Justice
Programmes of the Human Rights Commission	3	Staff of the Ministry of Justice

(c) Protection of the safety and integrity of persons involved in protecting victims of the offences described in the Protocol

113. The legislation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia criminalizes the use of force, violence or threats against public officials and persons of similar status, including persons involved in protecting victims of the offences described in the Protocol, pursuant to article 8 of the Anti-Bribery Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/36 of A.H. 29 Dhu al-Hijja 1412 (30 June 1992). In addition, article 2 (8) of Royal Decree No. 43 of A.H. 1377 (1958) prohibits the commission of acts of abuse or coercion in public office, such as torture, cruelty, confiscation of assets and denial of personal liberties. It also prohibits the imposition of exemplary punishment or fines, imprisonment, expulsion, compulsory residence in a specific location, and unlawful entry of private dwellings. Such acts are punishable under the Decree by imprisonment for a term of up to 10 years or by a fine of up to SRI 200,000 (US$ 53,325).

114. Article 22 of the Child Protection Act requires the competent authorities to facilitate procedures for reporting cases of abuse and neglect. Furthermore, article 22 (13) of the implementing regulations states that it is not permissible to disclose the identity of the person reporting the infringement or the case of abuse or neglect without his or her consent. Written consent is required in all but the following cases: (a) if the Social Protection Unit considers, in very limited instances, that disclosure of the identity of the informant is necessary on substantive grounds in order to address the case of abuse; (b) if the Social Protection Unit receives a formal and substantiated request from an official body or if the request for disclosure is issued by a judicial authority, the bodies who disclose the identity of the informant are required to preserve its confidentiality and refrain from any negligent disclosure; anyone who fails to respect this requirement is held accountable. Article 22 (14) stipulates that: "Any person who reports violations of the provisions of the Act or its implementing regulations or of a case of child abuse or neglect of the child shall be deemed to be of good faith unless there is evidence to the contrary." The Protection from Abuse Act contains similar provisions regarding non-disclosure of the informant's identity. Article 5 (2) of the Act provides for the disciplinary accountability, in accordance with legally established procedures, of any civil or military official in the public sector and any employee in the private sector who violates any provision of the Act concerning the reporting of cases of abuse.

(d) Guarantee of a fair and impartial trial

115. The judiciary in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia complies with the principle that offences and penalties shall be strictly defined by law. Article 38 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that: "Penalties shall be personal. There shall be no offence or penalty save in accordance with the sharia or a statutory provision, and there shall be no punishment save for acts committed after the entry into force of a statutory provision." Article 3 of the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that: "No criminal penalty shall be imposed on any person unless he has been found guilty of an act that is prohibited by the sharia or by statutory legislation, and only after a trial conducted in accordance with sharia principles." Accordingly, the legislation contains many procedural guarantees that control the conduct of criminal proceedings, and guarantee the rights of the accused by ensuring that all persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty by a final judgment based on the sharia and statutory requirements enshrined in the provisions of the Code and the legislation applicable to the case. Article 4 of the Code of Criminal Procedure guarantees the right of accused persons to seek the assistance of a lawyer or defence counsel to defend them during the investigation and the trial. Article 70 of the Code prohibits investigators from separating accused persons from their lawyer or defence counsel during the investigation, and guarantees the right of the lawyer or defence counsel to submit a written memorandum containing his observations for inclusion in the case file. Article 84 prohibits the investigator from seizing any document or paper submitted by accused persons to their lawyer or defence counsel in connection with the performance of the services entrusted to him, or the correspondence exchanged between them on the case. Article 139 of the Code

states that if accused persons cannot afford to obtain the assistance of counsel, they may request the court to appoint a lawyer to defend them at the State's expense.

116. Accused persons are summoned to attend legal proceedings in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Sharia Procedure and they must be tried in public, in accordance with article 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, unless the judge considers that there are grounds for closed hearings. Article 157 states that no physical restraints should be placed on the accused during court hearings. With regard to the procedures applicable to the hearings, the court is not bound by the description of the charges contained in the public prosecutor's list. The charges should be correctly described, even if the description is incompatible with the list of charges, and the court must inform the accused of such amendments, in accordance with article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Accused persons must be informed during court hearings of the charges against them and be given the opportunity to defend themselves, in accordance with article 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. When a judge hands down a judgment, he must present the legal grounds for the conviction or acquittal, and the evidence for the penalty imposed, in accordance with article 181 (2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Judgments in criminal cases are not enforced until they have become final. The judge must promptly release accused persons in the event of an acquittal, if they have already served their sentence or if they are not sentenced to a term of imprisonment, in accordance with article 213 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. It should be noted that measures to protect the rights of children do not have an impact on the rights of persons accused of offences described in the Protocol to fair trial guarantees.

(e) Social reintegration programmes

117. In addition to what has been stated in this report, rehabilitation and social integration are a remedial requirement for children who are victims of the offences described in the Protocol and other offences. Article 19 (1) of the implementing regulations of the Child Protection Act stipulates that: "All competent authorities, in particular the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Health, shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological rehabilitation and social reintegration of a child who is the victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, abuse, torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or of an armed conflict. Such rehabilitation and reintegration shall take place in an environment that promotes the child's health, self-respect and dignity." Article 19 (2) of the implementing regulations provides for a range of measures to rehabilitate child victims of ill-treatment and enable them to return to their family and natural environment, including treatment, psychological rehabilitation, education, and development of social and self-protection skills, as well as addiction treatment, if necessary, for their parents or caregivers. Article 19 (3) of the implementing regulations requires the authorities to study cases of child abuse, neglect or ill-treatment from the standpoint of health, psychology, and social, economic and legal conditions, to take appropriate action, and to provide for regular oversight of such cases when the children are returned to their parents or caregivers.

118. The Protection from Abuse Act and its implementing regulations also provide for the rehabilitation and social reintegration of victims. Article 2 of the Act states that they should be provided with assistance, treatment, shelter and the requisite social, psychological and health care. Article 2 (3) of the implementing regulations stipulates that: "The Ministry [the Ministry of Labour and Social Development] shall coordinate with relevant public and private bodies to ensure the provision of accommodation services, and of moral, psychological, social, health-care and security assistance and support for cases of abuse."

119. The Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act also envisages numerous procedures for protecting victims, such as the following: placement of victims in a specialized centre if they are in need of shelter; provision, if necessary, of security protection; placement in a medical, psychological or social rehabilitation centre if their medical or psychological condition or their age so requires; granting them the right to reside in the Kingdom and to regularize their status; presentation of victims to a competent physician if they prove to be

in need of medical or psychological care; informing them of their legal rights in a language that they understand in order to encourage them to provide comprehensive information regarding the offence so that the perpetrators can be identified and punished.

120. It should be noted that all child victims of abuse, whether citizens or residents, receive assistance for their recovery and reintegration on an equal basis.

(f) Remedies

121. The law requires all State bodies to provide redress for all persons, regardless of their religion, race, gender or nationality. In the event of a violation of a right by any of these bodies, their representatives or any other person, there are a number of mechanisms, including the following, that provide effective safeguards of human rights in accordance with legal procedures:

- The judiciary;
- Competent governmental departments and committees;
- Governmental and non-governmental human rights institutions;
- The Royal Council and the Council of the Crown Prince are also legally established redress mechanisms. Article 43 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that: "The Royal Council and the Council of the Crown Prince shall be open to all citizens and to anyone with a complaint or a grievance. All persons shall have the right to contact the public authorities regarding matters affecting them." Provincial governors play an active role in the promotion and protection of human rights. Article 7 (c) of the Provinces Act, which was promulgated by Royal Decree No. A/92 of A.H. 27 Sha'ban 1412 (2 March 1992), states that provincial governors are responsible for guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of individuals and must refrain from taking any action that would violate those rights and freedoms, save within the limits prescribed by the Islamic sharia and the law.

VII. International assistance and cooperation

122. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has concluded multilateral and bilateral agreements on legal and security cooperation with a number of countries. The following are some of the most important agreements:

- The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2004);
- The Arab Agreement on the Extradition of Fugitive Offenders (1952-1953);
- The Arab Convention on Combating Transnational Organized Crime (2010);
- The Arab Convention on Combating Information Technology Offences (1986);
- The Agreement on the Enforcement of Judgments, Letters Rogatory and Judicial Notices in the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council (A.H. 1417; 1996);
- The Riyadh Agreement on Judicial Cooperation (A.H. 1420; 1999).

Bilateral agreements on legal and security cooperation were also concluded with a number of States.

123. The Kingdom is one of the leading world's donor countries in terms of development aid and humanitarian assistance. It provides bilateral aid through institutions such as the Saudi Fund for Development and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre. It provides multilateral aid through international bodies such as the United Nations and regional bodies such as the Islamic Development Bank. There has been an increase in Saudi Arabian aid in terms of scale and country coverage. Total aid in 2014 recorded a very steep increase of 230 per cent compared with 2013, i.e. from US$ 4.3 billion to US$ 14.5 billion (from SRI 16 billion to SRI 54 billion). Many countries and international and regional organizations have benefited from the development aid and humanitarian assistance. Such

aid has a positive impact, as a matter of course, on the situation of children and their families in many countries, protecting them from exposure to the crimes of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

124. In addition to the information contained in the report on assistance provided by the Kingdom to relevant organizations such as UNICEF, the **King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre** was established on A.H. 24 Rajab 1436 (12 May 2015). The Centre undertakes international relief and humanitarian work through a range of programmes based on cutting-edge global models with a view to enhancing the vital role played by the Kingdom's relief and aid programmes in assisting fate-stricken communities and relieving their suffering so that they can lead a decent life. It seeks to harmonize the relief work undertaken by the Kingdom abroad and to coordinate the action taken by national governmental and non-governmental relief agencies. The following table shows the projects undertaken by the Centre and the types of assistance provided:

Food security, shelter and camp coordination projects	
Number of projects	92
Number of beneficiaries	23 278 317
Total amount (in US dollars)	**345 598 694**
Number of partners	33
Education, protection and early recovery projects	
Number of projects	15
Number of beneficiaries	3 914 236
Total amount (in US dollars)	**75 626 921**
Number of partners	12
Health, nutrition and environmental sanitation projects	
Number of projects	54
Number of beneficiaries	25 612 323
Total amount (in US dollars)	**209 050 428**
Number of partners	47
Emergency communication projects, logistic services and support for and coordination of humanitarian operations	
Number of projects	9
Number of beneficiaries	15 627
Total amount (in US dollars)	**48 948 162**
Number of partners	4
Total	
Total number of projects	**170**
Total amount (in US dollars)	**679 224 205**
Total number of partners	**96**

125. The Centre has concluded agreements with a number of United Nations specialized agencies. Thus, it concluded an agreement with UNICEF at a cost of US$ 29,600,000 and an agreement with the World Food Programme (WFP) at a cost of US$ 125,248,945. It signed an implementation programme with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at a cost of US$ 5,825,632, an implementation programme with the World Health Organization (WHO) at a cost of US$ 22,197,163, an implementation programme with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at a cost of US$ 1,743,200, and a programme with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at a cost of US$ 31,000,000.

126. The Kingdom, together with other Gulf States, established the Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND) in 1981 to support United Nations humanitarian and development organizations. It aims to support human development efforts, focusing on the most vulnerable people in developing countries, especially women and children. Since its creation, AGFUND has contributed to the establishment, support and financing of 1,466 projects in a number of developing countries.

127. The Kingdom participated in the first and second sessions of the Global Summit for the protection of victims of child sexual exploitation on the Internet held in London and Abu Dhabi and announced its intention to join the "WePROTECT" initiative aimed at tackling online child sexual exploitation in 2017.

128. The Kingdom participated in the development of the Arab Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which was adopted by Decision No. 879-D27 of the Arab Council of Ministers of Justice on A.H. 22 Rabi' al-Awwal 1433 (15 February 2012), the Arab Model Law for Combating the Crime of Human Trafficking, which was adopted by the Arab Council of Ministers of Justice at its 21st session on A.H. 28 Shawwal 1426 (29 November 2005) and by the Arab Council of Ministers of the Interior at its 23rd session in 2006, and which was amended pursuant to Decision No. 920-D28 of the Arab Council of Ministers of Justice on A.H. 2 Muharram 1434 (26 November 2012), and the Standard Model Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons adopted by the Supreme Council of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf at its 27th session in Riyadh on A.H. 19 Shab'an 1427 (10 September 2006).

129. It should be noted that the joint projects with UNICEF, based on the Kingdom's National Childhood Strategy, comprise a number of programmes, in particular: programmes to raise awareness among the general public and professionals of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; a descriptive study of the situation of kindergartens in the Kingdom; a family and community awareness-raising project on the impact and risks of child abuse; and a study of the current situation of children in the Kingdom.

130. The Kingdom held the National Forum for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Internet from A.H. 15 to 17 Safar 1438 (15-17 November 2016), under the patronage of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, the Minister of the Interior, who attended the Forum. A number of States and regional and international organizations and mechanisms, including Interpol and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), participated in the Forum.

Conclusion

131. This initial report describes some of the actions taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to implement the provisions of the Protocol and the progress made. It should be noted that some of the information provided by the Kingdom in the combined third and fourth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child were omitted from the present report. The Kingdom reaffirms its commitment to taking further vigorous action to promote and protect the rights of the child.